



FALL 2012



LOVERS LANE MKTO MINN.



COPYRIGHT 1912
F.D. SPOTSWOOD, LEX., KY 8N AFTER THE ACCIDENT

WHO IS TO BLAME?

Boys and girls have a marked faculty of forgetting everything else when in the violent action of play. They don't see dangers until they run on to them, as the mind is bent and the attention concentrated with the eagerness of youth, upon the running, or jumping or other forms of frolicsome sport.

It is therefore very unsafe for children to play on the streets of a city, and it is directly courting disaster for them to do so.

Parents should realize this and vigorously and promptly instruct and correct the child before the little boy or girl is brought home on a stretcher, dead or maimed for life.

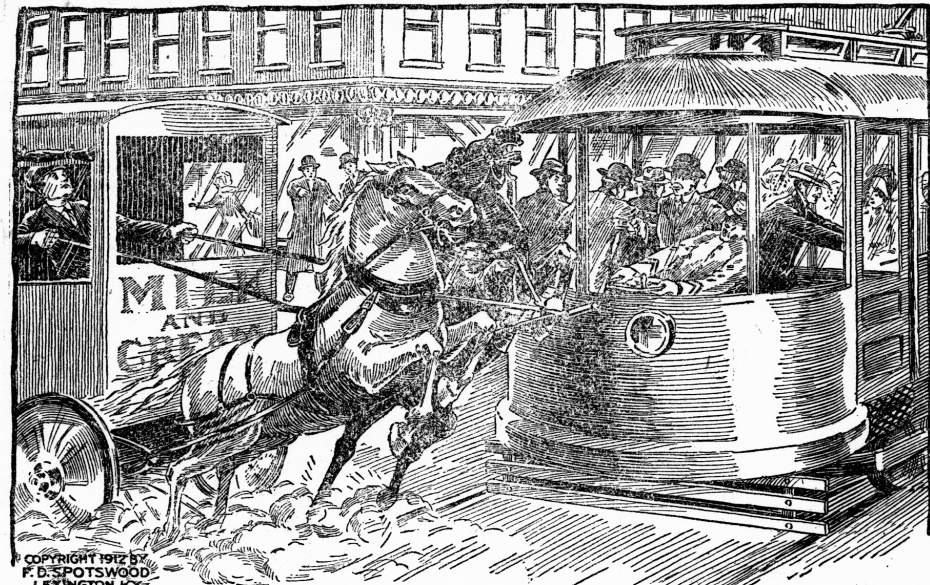
The question might then arise, "Who is responsible?"

The MOTORMAN is not to blame—he could not stop his car in time.

The BOY is not to blame—he is nothing but a care-free, heedless child.

**FATHER AND MOTHER, WHO ALLOWED HIM TO PLAY ON THE
STREETS, ARE YOUR SKIRTS FREE?**

Mankato Electric Traction Co.



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F.D. SPOTSWOOD
LEXINGTON, KY.

11N THE HEEDLESS MILKMAN

A WARNING TO DRIVERS

This fellow was late on his rounds and the cold air was nipping his fingers and ears. He slapped the lines down impatiently on the backs of his horses and the vehicle rattled off rapidly towards the car tracks. Of course the driver knew the car might be coming but he thought

"NOT THIS TIME."

The rattle of his team prevented his hearing—he saw the car too late to stop and a bad accident followed.

We beg the drivers of Wagons, Teams, Buggies and Automobiles to remember that the cars are bound to run upon a fixed track and cannot vary their course, nor shut off their speed at once—but the drivers can, and the responsibility for a collision is generally with them. **DRIVERS! BE DELIBERATE AND CAREFUL WHEN CROSSING A TRACK OR DRIVING BESIDE IT.**

GO SLOW AND LOOK UP AND DOWN THE TRACK BEFORE CROSSING

Mankato Electric Traction Company.

TWIN CITY LINES

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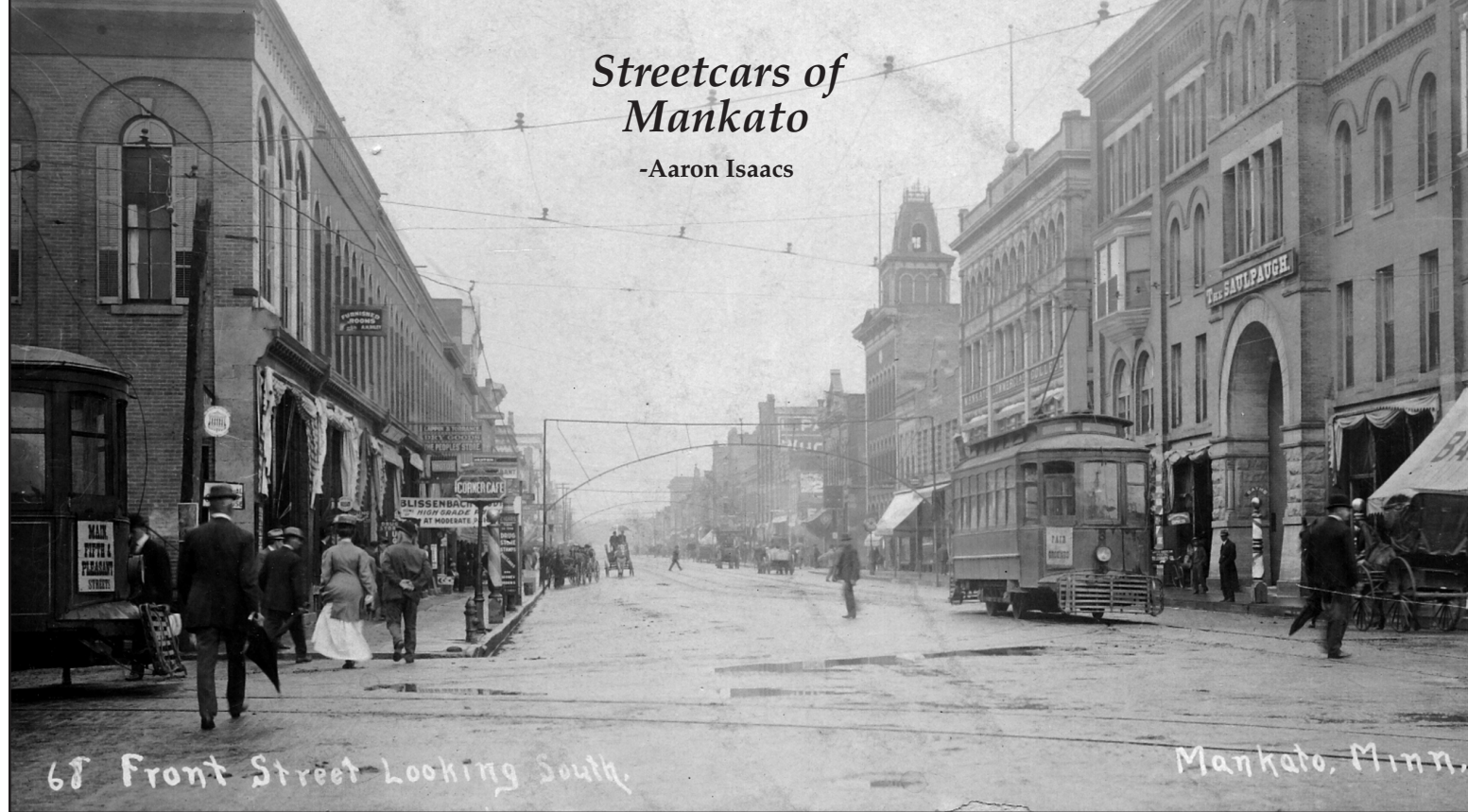
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Streetcars of Mankato

-Aaron Isaacs



Information on the smaller outstate streetcar systems tends to be limited, usually enough for only a single article in this magazine, so it's always a challenge to know when enough has accumulated to write that article. When Dave French found and purchased this issue's cover photo, it seemed like the right time to do Mankato, but I needed to fill in gaps in the history. A visit to the Blue Earth County Historical Society uncovered a good file of newspaper clippings on the streetcars. Combined with Russ Olson's past research, we now have a pretty good picture of the Mankato Electric Traction Company (METC), which ran electric cars from 1908 to 1930.

METC was actually the town's second streetcar operator. In 1885, when the population was only about 7000, the Mankato Street Railway opened as a horse car line. I briefly covered it in the last issue of TCL, but more info is now available and some errors need correction. According to a 1908 newspaper article, the horse car line initially was opened on Front Street from Vine Street to Sibley Park. That's farther east than last issue's map showed. Also, the west end of the line didn't extend under the railroad tracks into Sibley Park, as shown in last issue's map. Instead, it turned south on Woodland Avenue to Front, then west a couple of blocks to the Blue Earth River

bridge.

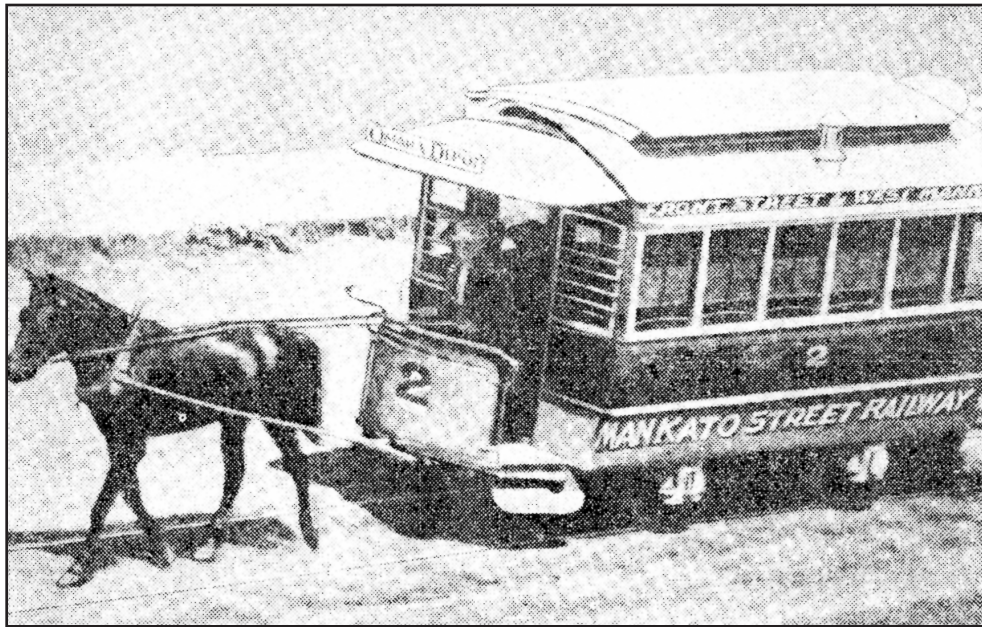
I also found better info on the route of the branch that climbed the hill from South Front Street. Apparently constructed in 1887, it diverged at Liberty Street, then followed Broad, Center, Bradley and Byron to Lewis (see map). The branch was poorly patronized and was abandoned in 1890.

At Blue Earth, I also found this rather poor photo of a Mankato horse car, the only one seen to date. Note the Omaha Depot destination sign, proof that the branch up the hill on Washington to 4th Street actually existed.

We now know that the carbarn was located on South Front Street just west

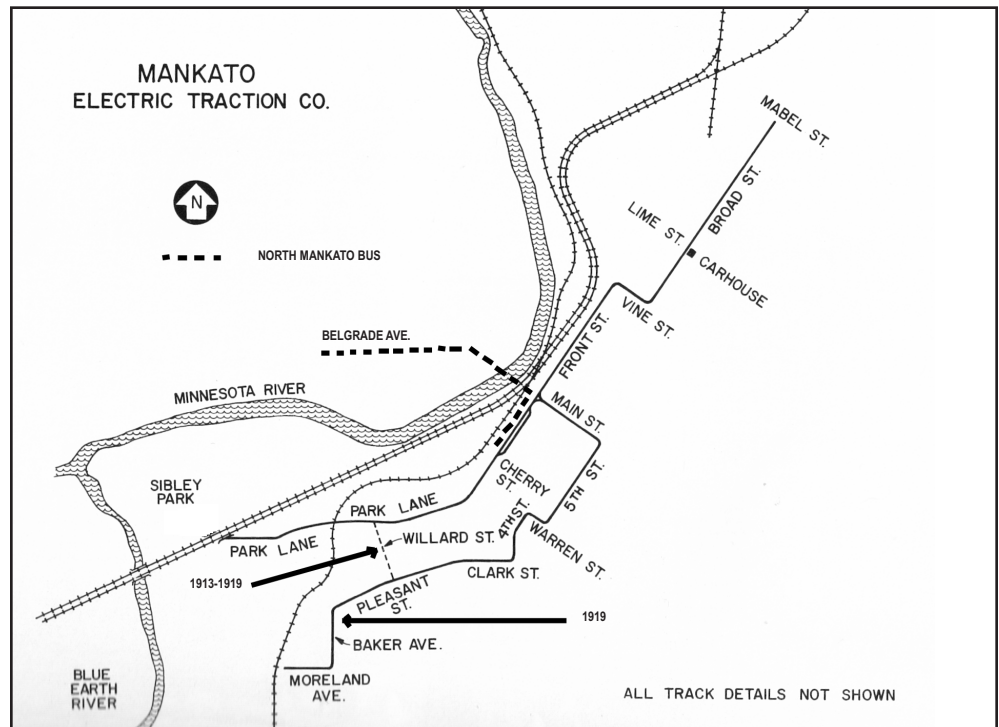
Front cover: A Mankato streetcar passes through the section of North Broad Street dubbed Lovers Lane. This photo looks northeast from about May Street, a short distance from the the east end of the Main Line. In this issue we explore this small town traction system.

Above: Mankato's two lines met at Front and Main Streets. Note the short section of Front Street double track that begins just this side of the nearest arch.

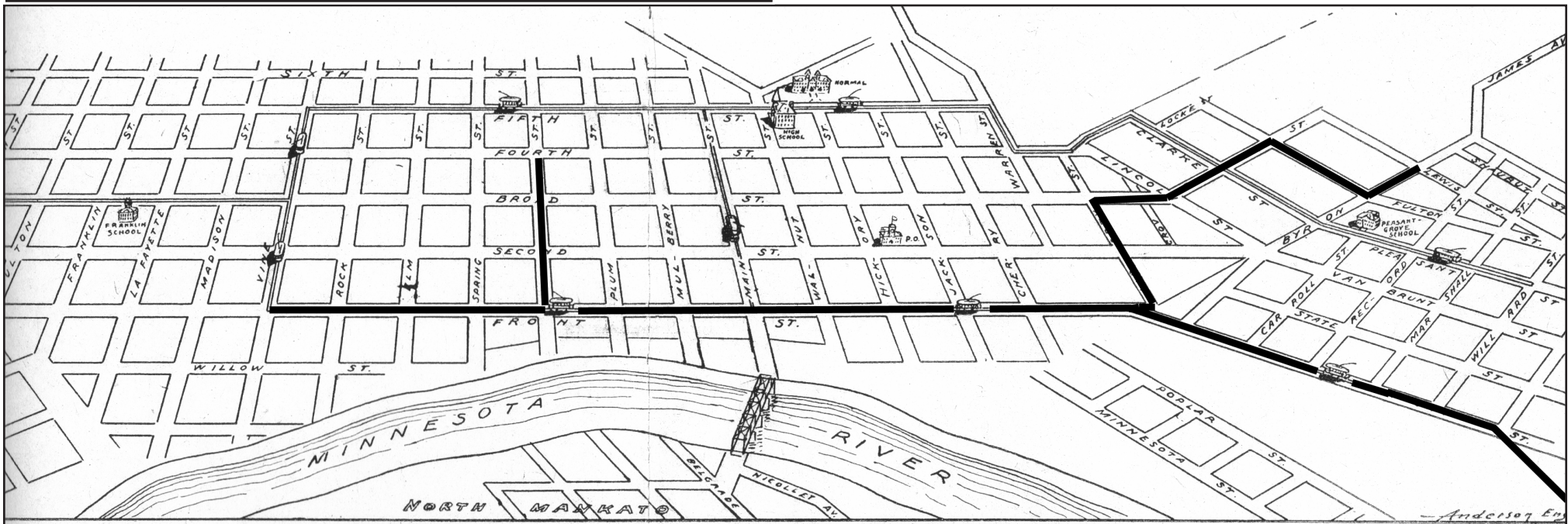


Above: The only known photo of a Mankato horsecar.

Below: This map appeared in the Mankato paper in 1907, before the start of construction. I added the horsecar lines in heavy black, correcting errors that appeared in the Summer 2012 issue. Note that the map includes electric car segments on 5th Street from Main to Vine, and on Vine from Broad to 5th Street that were never built. Blue Earth County Historical Society collection.



Here again is the Mankato map from Electric Railways of Minnesota, with the North Mankato bus and Hill Line extension dates added.



of Willard. Four horse cars operated from 6:30 AM to 10 PM. According to the 1890 census, the company owned five cars, 16 horses and 3.5 miles of track. The first three days of service saw perhaps the highest ridership in the line's history, 966 on the first day, 1033 on the second and 1455 on the third. Thereafter the line never turned a profit, except on special occasions like fairs and circuses.

The system never completed the transition from horses to electric cars. An article in the Mankato paper tells the story. "In 1891, by which time electricity was beginning to be extensively used for propelling street cars, the council passed ordinance no. 88, granting the company the right to operate its cars by electricity. Ordinance no. 92, extended the time for two or three years within which

electricity was to be installed, and ordinance no. 95 extended it still further."

It's unclear if overhead wires were actually strung. Russ Olson found an 1892 directory that listed the company as owning two horse cars and three electric cars built by Brownell Car Company. The company entered bankruptcy and ceased operations about September 1895.

Electric cars

By 1900, Mankato's population had grown to 10,599, yet it had no streetcars. This would continue until 1908, when the Mankato Electric Traction Company began service. The car barn was located at the corner of North Broad and Franklin. Two lines totaling five miles were constructed.



Above: The first day of the new electric cars on May 1, 1908 was declared "Street Car Day" in Mankato.

Left: Summers in Mankato saw open car service for the first few years.



The Main Line began at Broad Street and Mabel Street on the east, then via Broad, Vine and Front to 4th Street (now called Park Lane). The track ended just before the Chicago & North Western railroad overpass. A 1914 atlas shows that the streetcars didn't actually enter the park. There was a stub siding at the end of the line. The system was single track, except for four blocks of double track on Front between Main and Cherry. A passing siding was located on Front at Wilton Street.

The Hill Line started at Front and Main Streets, climbed the hillside on Main and then ran on 5th Street across the hillside serving the State Normal School and the Mankato High School, before making several turns through a residential neighborhood and ending at Pleasant and Willard Streets. There was a passing siding on 5th Street between Jackson and Cherry Streets, in front of the State Normal School.



Postcards from the past. Above: Hill Line streetcars served the Mankato High School on 5th Street, as well as the nearby State Teachers College.

Below: Main Line cars passed the Hubbard Mill on North Front Street.

Above right: A 1920s scene in an unidentified residential neighborhood.



In 1913 the Hill Line was extended down the hill on Willard Street to Front, where it again met the Main Line. The 1914 atlas shows a switch from Willard to northbound Front, implying that the line might have been run as a continuous one-way loop, returning to downtown on Front. If this happened, it didn't last. In either 1917 or 1919, the track on Willard was removed and the Hill Line was extended west .8 mile to the intersection of Moreland and Hazel. That was the extent of track construction.

McGuire-Cummings Company had built most of the company's streetcars and in 1912 Walter Cummings purchased most of METC's stock. The next year he sold it to the Mississippi Valley Electric Company of Iowa City, which remained the owner for the rest of the streetcar era.

We have snapshots of the fleet at several points in time. It generally ranged between 7 and 10 cars, all single truckers (see table). Initially there were three open cars, as well as unpowered trailers. In 1914 trailer use was discontinued. We don't know how long the open cars lasted but they were probably gone by then, following the national trend.

The color scheme changed twice. Initially the cars were a dark Pullman green, which was almost standard for streetcars of that era. In 1910 it was reported that the fleet was being

repainted yellow. Perhaps that color was harder to maintain, because in 1913 they were again repainted, this time in olive green with white numbers and cherry window frames.

METC was an early adopter of two important innovations, PAYE fare collection and one-man operation. PAYE is short for Pay As You Enter. Before PAYE, passengers boarded, took a seat and while the car was rolling toward the next stop, the conductor located them and collected their fares by hand. With PAYE, they dropped their fare in a registering fare box upon boarding, like the ones we have on our streetcars.

There were two advantages to PAYE. If ridership was heavy, it prevented passengers from hiding in the crowd and eluding the conductor. In a small, quiet operation like Mankato, which averaged only three passengers per car

Roster timeline

April 1908 10 cars

1908 4 closed motors, 3 open motors, 1 unpowered but soon to be powered

1912 5 motor cars and 7-8 open trailers on roster

1914 8 passenger cars, 3 trailers.

1915 converted to 1 man

1916 10 passenger cars (8 motors)

1920 7 motor cars

1920s 6 motor cars (3 active) 1 sweeper and 1 service trailer



Front and Main was the transfer point between the Main Line (Car 7 at right, which ironically didn't run on Main Street) and the Hill Line car, viewed head-on.

the lunch hour, from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM. This reflected the custom of the times—employees traveling home for lunch. During the rest of the day both routes ran every 20 minutes. While slightly less frequent than the previous 18-minute headway, it was easier for riders to remember and that probably helped increase ridership. It also gave the crews a 2-minute break at each end of the Main Line. An 18 or 12-minute frequency provided no break. One-way running time on the Main Line was 18 minutes.

Due to public demand, in November 1910 a single car made an additional trip on the Hill Line at 11:39 PM, then to the east end of the Main Line at 11:57 PM. It's unclear if this was a permanent addition or just for the holiday season.

In October 1915, the conversion to one-man operation provoked a major schedule change. Like a number of

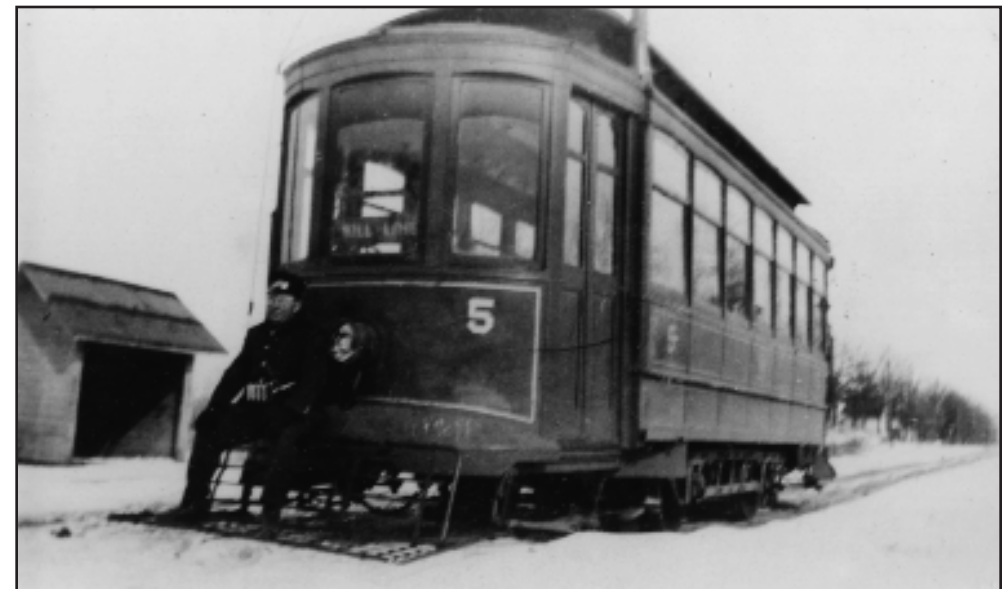
mile, passenger cheating was seldom a problem, but the registering farebox made it much harder for conductors to skim fares. It was implemented in Mankato in 1911. The Twin Cities didn't follow until about 1920.

Likewise, Mankato eliminated conductors and switched to one-man operation in 1915, while TCRT didn't start to really phase out conductors until 1930. Of course, one-man operation was much easier where there were few passengers. It didn't slow down the service, whereas the heavy urban TCRT lines could easily bog down and suffer delays as people filed one at a time past the motorman and his farebox. A conductor could load the rear platform and collect fares while the car headed for the next stop. By cutting its employee cost almost in half, METC's bottom line improved considerably. METC used these savings to shorten the motormen's work day from 11.5 to 8.5 hours, increase wages

and add service, as described below.

Service levels

Given the relatively short distances covered by the streetcars, frequent service was needed to compete with walking, bicycling and—in later years—the automobile. The 1908 startup saw the most ambitious schedule in the line's history, every 12 minutes on both lines from 6 AM to 11 PM. This required 3 cars on the Main Line, and 2 cars on the Hill Line. It was apparently more service than the ridership could support, because after a year the frequency was lengthened to every 18 minutes on both lines (2 cars on the Main Line, 1 car on the Hill Line). A newspaper story says this suppressed ridership, so in October 1909, the schedule was revised. During the morning and afternoon rush hours the 12-minute frequency returned. There was also 12-minute service over



The motorman takes his two minutes of relaxation at the south end of the Hill Line.



The Hill Line climbed the ever-steeper Main Street hill as far as 5th Street, by the large building in the center of the photo. Pete Bonesteel collection. You know the grade is steep (9 percent), when they build a toboggan run next to the tracks. The year was 1920. Blue Earth County Historical Society collection.



other small city systems, METC took the savings from eliminating conductors and reinvested much of it in more frequent service. Gone was the 20-minute frequency with 12-minute rush hour and lunchtime service. The Main Line and Hill Line again ran every 12 minutes all day, with transfer meets between the two lines at the corner of Front and Main Streets.

On a typical day, I estimate the streetcars carried about 2500 people. On the very first 4th of July in 1908 8409 people rode. The all-time record for a single day was July 4, 1916. The circus came to town, set up in Sibley Park at the west end of the Main Line, and 10,108 passengers took a ride.

We don't know when the schedule changed after that, but there is one clue. For years there was pressure to cross the Minnesota River into North Mankato, but the bridge could not support the weight of streetcars. The company in 1914 publicly promised to extend service if a new bridge was

built, but that never happened. Finally in 1925 a bus was purchased and bus service began across the river, as shown in the ad at right. Note that the bus ran every 20 minutes. I would guess that by then the streetcars also were running every 20 minutes on both lines. That would ensure timed transfer connections between the bus and the two streetcar lines, and, as mentioned before, the public much preferred a "clock" headway. Alas, after five months the North Mankato bus was abandoned. It would not reappear until 1930.

We have fare revenue numbers for a few years. They show that from 1908 to 1922, revenues climbed. We also know that first year ridership was 750,000, and the 1914 ridership was 686,000. Based on that, I've estimated ridership for later years based on assumptions about the average fare (see table). Apparently METC was profitable for most of its life. It declared 5 cent dividends in 1914 and 1915.

Big plans

The decade of 1905-1915 was the height of the interurban building boom. Often a speculative business, schemes

North Mankato Bus Service

Bus Service in Connection With Our Street Railway Has Been Inaugurated to North Mankato.

Bus will operate between corner of Front and Cherry Streets in Mankato and West end of Belgrade Ave. in North Mankato. First bus leaves Mankato at 6:10 A. M.; North Mankato at 6:20 A. M. and every twenty minutes thereafter. Sunday service begins one hour later.

Fare Same as Our Electric Cars With Bus Transfers.

MANKATO ELECTRIC TRACTION CO.

3/9/1925



Above: Streetcars fight snow on Front Street. The company was responsible for plowing its tracks, but was not allowed to leave windrows in the street, so it ultimately had to clear the whole street. Below: Car 19 is a bit of a mystery because of its high number, which exceeds the number of cars ever owned by the company.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Ridership</u>
1908	\$34,500	750,000
1909	\$34,500	795,000
1914	\$31,612	686,000
1921	\$44,133	962,099
1922	\$40,955	892,819
1923	\$35,494	773,769
1924	\$33,507	730,452
1925	\$31,843	*496,336
1926	\$29,277	456,340
1927	\$28,023	436,795
1928	\$24,184	376,956
*Fare increase		

for new lines greatly outnumbered those that were actually built. Mankato was no exception. METC had grand designs for two interurbans. In 1911, assuming a new bridge would be built over the Minnesota River, it speculated on a ten-mile extension through North Mankato to St. Peter. In 1913 it rolled out a plan to build 12 miles southeast to St. Clair. From there it would string wire over the existing Milwaukee Road to Albert Lea, a distance of 40 miles. Neither came close to happening.

Actually, an interurban of sorts did make it to Mankato. The Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester & Dubuque Electric Traction Company, better known as the

Dan Patch Line, extended its gas-electric cars from Northfield to Mankato via trackage rights over the Chicago Great Western in 1913. Through service operated from Minneapolis four times daily. Three of these were locals, taking 4 hours and 5 minutes to cover the 107 miles. One trip was an express that ran non-stop between Minneapolis and Northfield, and it made the entire run in 3 hours and 25 minutes. Running time was slower than the Omaha Road's more direct 96-mile route up the Minnesota River valley. Its seven daily trains made the run in 3-3.5 hours.

The Dan Patch's Mankato service only lasted until 1916. The Dan Patch went through receivership in 1918 and was reorganized as the Minneapolis, Northfield & Southern. It reinstituted service to Mankato in 1921 which lasted until 1931.

Decline

Following the national trend, automobile competition began driving down ridership starting in 1922. To counter the loss in fare revenue and the effects of inflation, in 1925 the cash fare was doubled from 5 cents to 10 cents, although tokens could be purchased

four for 25 cents (6.25 cents). Ridership loss jumped with the fare increase, but by 1928 revenues had declined by only 45 percent, compared to a 61 decline in ridership. This happened even though Mankato's population grew 13 percent to 14,038 during the 1920s. For the first time in 1928, METC was unable to cover its costs. Even before the company went into the red, it was clear they were cutting costs deeply. For example, a 1924 letter to the editor complains of streetcars running with flat wheels, a sign that basic repairs were being delayed. Also, only three cars were active and the rest were stored.

As revenue declined during the 1920s, the city's operating franchise came back to haunt METC. Like most franchises, it gave METC exclusive right to provide transit service, but that came at a price. It included the responsibility to maintain the street surface within the track area to a level comparable to the rest of the street. That meant periodic repaving whenever the city repaved their portion. In 1922 the city demanded that METC repave a section of street and the company refused, claiming poverty. The city council responded with an ordinance requiring removal of the tracks if the paving was not done. METC took the city to court. This quickly led to a settlement—METC would pay \$3000 toward the paving project. However, it showed that the

city did not regard the streetcar as an essential service.

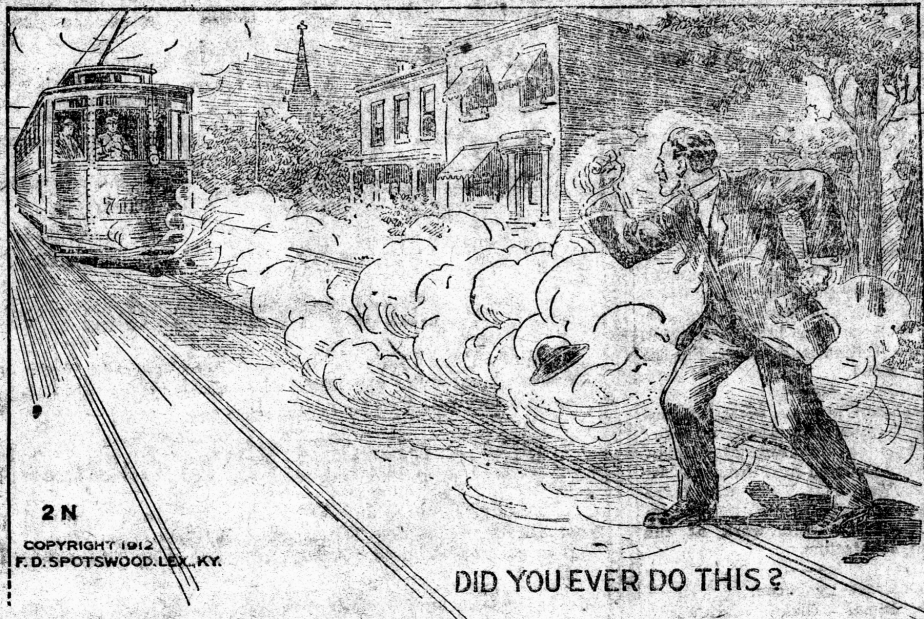
According to a newspaper story, quite a few people stored their autos in the winter, but drove them during the warm weather months. For some years summer service ran at a deficit, but the company made it up in the winter. As roads became more all weather and autos more reliable, year round driving plus the devastating effects of the Great Depression pushed ridership and revenue too low for the company to continue. It stopped paying its electric bill in October 1929, and the last day of service was March 8, 1930. Five buses took over, including a revival of service to North Mankato.

Two remnants of the streetcars survived. The body of car #7 was sold as an outbuilding. By the late 1980s it was discovered by the local newspaper, which ran an article speculating on whether or not it would be preserved. By this time it was less than complete—a stripped body missing its end platforms. Another newspaper account says that it was sold in late 1991 to Todd Lieferman of Madison Lake. It is unknown if the car is still around.

The carbarn did get a new lease on life, surviving today as a wing of Our Savior's Lutheran Church on North Broad Street.

The carbarn survives as the wing of a Lutheran church. Jan Albrecht photo.





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F. D. SPOTSWOOD, LEX., KY.

DID YOU EVER DO THIS?

THERE GOES THE CAR!!

You are hopping mad about it and stand shaking your fist at the retreating car.

But how was the Motorman to know you wanted him to stop? You were too forgetful or too indifferent to raise your hand and he may have decided in looking you over that you were only waiting for the car to pass. Generally he is not a mind reader.

You cannot expect him to stop his car and come back for you after he discovers, too late, that you wanted to get on.

The other passengers would naturally object.

Another time you wanted to get off, but you kept it to yourself. Got interested in the paper or talking politics to your neighbor. Of course the Conductor could not stop for you in the middle of the block—the other passengers might object.

DON'T GET SORE at the Conductor or blame the Company.

The Street Car is not a **PRIVATE** institution, but run for the **GENERAL BENEFIT** of the public on sane principles.

ALWAYS SIGNAL FOR A STOP! HAVE YOUR FARE READY! BE PROMPT TO GET OFF—AND ALL IN THE INTEREST OF GOOD SERVICE.

Mankato Electric Traction Co.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TRANSFER

-Aaron Isaacs

If you ride a Metro Transit bus today and have to use a second bus or a train to complete your trip, you simply request a transfer from the driver and think no more of it. Indeed, free transfers have been a staple of public transportation for well over a century. Yet it was not always so.

The 1890s were TCRT's adolescence, spent learning how to be an adult transit system through trial and error. Experiments with the transfer system inflated the number of trials and errors considerably.

The issue goes back to the horse car era, which began in Minneapolis in 1875. There were no free transfers for the first 15 years. Each boarding required a nickel fare. This was a fine thing for the Minneapolis Street Railway's (it didn't become TCRT until 1890) bottom line, but the riding public—which was almost everyone—cried foul. Just because the company couldn't provide a through ride from origin to destination on a single car, why should the passengers pay for that failing?

The Minneapolis City Council concurred, and in June 1887 passed an ordinance mandating free transfers between lines. The same ordinance also required the hiring of conductors. Previously all streetcars had been one-man. However, passing an ordinance and enforcing it were two different things. The company was heavily leveraged trying to build more track to keep up with the rapidly growing city. Hiring conductors would double the cost of crews, while free transfers would reduce revenue.

MSR objected to the imposition of a transfer requirement, arguing that it violated the old ordinance, which said, "...the city shall not reduce the passenger fare below five cents over any continuous line, and what shall be considered a continuous line...shall not be designated...to be more than three

TWIN
CITY
LINES

ASK for and see that you receive your transfer when you pay your fare. While the conductor is supposed to offer a transfer to the passenger when he collects the fare, there is also a responsibility resting upon the passenger to see that he gets his transfer. Conductors are permitted to issue transfers only at the time of receiving fare. This is the convenient system used in all large cities, and it is designed particularly for the benefit of patrons. It disposes of the entire fare transaction at one time. Remember to get your transfer!

BE sure to tell the conductor to what line you desire to transfer and to ask him where you should transfer, if you are not certain, so that he may punch your transfer correctly. Always bear this in mind and you will be better served.

YOU are invited to telephone, call on, or write to the undersigned for any information regarding our service. Such inquiries will always receive prompt and courteous attention.

A. W. WARNOCK, General Passenger Agent,
Hennepin Ave. and 11th St., Minneapolis
Telephones—N. W. Main 4580—T. S. 33 134



miles in length." The MSR attorney stated, "All of our lines are over three miles long, and some of them are six miles long."

Two months later the City Council retaliated, changing the definition of a "continuous line" to require free transfers. On September 10, 1887, Thomas Lowry objected to new ordinance mandating conductors and free transfers, saying "The question of 'transfer tickets' would impose on the company a great hardship."

Meanwhile, a similar dispute was playing out with the St. Paul City Council. As in Minneapolis, one of the Councilmen accused the Lowry-controlled St. Paul City Railway of ignoring an ordinance requiring transfer tickets. A spokesman for Lowry's SPCR responded that the ordinance had been previously overruled by the courts. The St. Paul city council passed another ordinance in September 1889 calling for free transfers in two years.

Conductors were hired in Minneapolis beginning in 1887, but the stalemate between MSR and the City of Minneapolis over free transfers continued into 1889. In August of that year, MSR announced a plan for a central transfer point in downtown. All cars would be routed through a new loop on 1st Avenue South (now called Marquette Avenue), High Street (where the main post office now stands), Hennepin Avenue and Washington Avenue. This, by the way, introduced the "LOOP" destination to the system's lexicon. The term became synonymous with "downtown", and remained in regular use on destination signs through the 1950s. Although it has fallen out of common use today, it survives within Metro Transit's operating vocabulary. Supervisor reports of lost service and fill-ins still say things like "Service lost from loop to 56th and Chicago", or "Fill-in from loop to 41st and Central to loop."

This newspaper article describes the Loop plan.



Minneapolis Tribune August 18, 1889 A "LOOP" IN THE CITY'S CENTER FORMS A COMMON TERMINUS TRANSFERS MADE EASY

The scheme of the system, which has occupied the attention of Thomas Lowry and his associates for over a year, is to have a common terminus or center, by which all cars must pass so as to enable passengers to transfer from one line to another by simply changing cars, with the smallest possible inconvenience, and thereby reach any portion of the city the different lines penetrate, by paying but one fare. This will be accomplished by constructing a loop. This loop will be built on Washington Avenue from Hennepin to 1st Avenue S., traversing 1st Avenue S. to High Street, along High Street to Hennepin Avenue to Washington Avenue. This will take every car past the Union Depot and also to the corner of Hennepin Avenue and Washington Avenue where passengers will be transferred.

Over a year after the previous article was published, the Loop was not yet completed, but the first transfers were issued.

Nov. 2, 1890

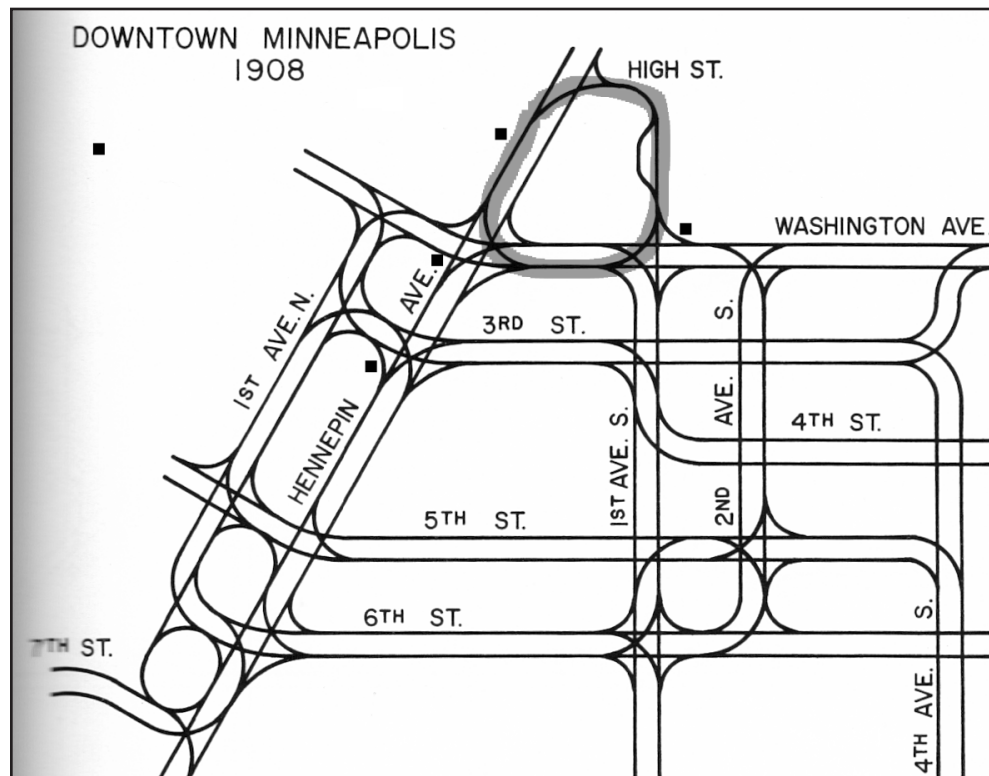
The street railway company has given its patrons another surprise, which will be regarded as one of the most agreeable events of the season. While the big fight was on the council last spring, and long before, Mr. Lowry promised the establishment of a transfer system between the several lines as soon as it was practicable to do so. This promise has been

The first transfer format--1890.

fulfilled in part, and its further conditions will be observed as fast as the necessity arises. Yesterday morning employees with the words "transfer agent" upon their caps were found on duty at the corner of Washington and Hennepin Avenues, and on 3rd Street at Hennepin and 1st Avenues S. These agents were authorized to issue transfer checks to those entitled to continuous passage from one line to another. They are also instructed to furnish passengers with all desired information in regard to the transfer system and the additional privilege secured when the new tickets are placed in their hands. Under this new arrangement, passengers will be enabled to connecting lines without extra cost. This system has been placed in operation without any fuss or feathers, and at a time when people were not expecting it in the least.

Dec. 10, 1890

The street railway company has adopted the transfer system with apparent success, but the kickers are not silent. They complain because they have got to get out of the car to get their transfer checks, and sometimes have to stand on the street corner while some one else is having his wants attended to. They allege further that the procession of passengers following the conductor up to the transfer agent looks very much like a flock of sheep being led up to the slaughter. They observe that there is a conductor on every car, who might just as well give out the transfer checks himself, as is done in many other cities, thus saving the passengers much trouble





A Nicollet Avenue car carries a LOOP sign, meaning that it terminates in downtown. Crossing Washington Avenue on Marquette Avenue, it is entering the original transfer loop and passing the site of one of the three original transfer stations.

and the company much expense.

Although the transfer system was implemented in 1890, the Loop itself was not yet in operation. The newspaper reported that some passengers had walk from as far as 6th Street to Washington to get their transfers. The Loop was completed in May 1891, but initially only the Interurban used it. All other lines except 4th Avenue S. were moved onto the loop in June and July.

In the months following its implementation, TCRT tinkered repeatedly with the transfer rules. Transfers at first were only issued for use on a specific line, and this immediately became controversial. Most of the streets leaving downtown

hosted multiple lines for some distance until they diverged. Passengers who could use more than line complained, so TCRT removed the single line restriction to permit boarding the first car on streets with multiple lines.

In order to eliminate the cut-rate reselling of unused transfers, the new year of 1891 saw a policy change that alienated the public. Upon boarding, passengers paid an additional nickel to the conductor for the transfer, and could only get the nickel refunded upon boarding the next car. Not surprisingly, it didn't last very long.

**Feb. 18, 1891
THE CONTINUED COMPLAINT
LEADS TO THE RESUMPTION OF
THE OLD TRANSFER SYSTEM**

While it has been supposed that the general public was getting better satisfied with the new transfer system the better they became acquainted with it, and that its advantages over the old were appearing more and more, there has been strong pressure brought to bear on the company against the system. All sorts of complaints have been made and it is said suits have even been threatened. The company has decided to give it up and go back to the old system. This morning you will have to get your transfer check from the agent on the corner. The new system, so-called, by which the passenger bought his transfer from the conductor, paying 5 cents in addition to his regular fare, which was refunded by the conductor on the other line, had been in operation just 24 days. The chief complaint seemed to be in regard

to the payment of the additional nickel, although the company established such regulations that the honest passengers ran almost no risk. However, the fault finder was persevering and he made life so miserable for anyone in the employ of the company that now he may have the old way back again. The chances are there will be a fresh chorus of kicks on account of this decision.

"We have decided to go back to the old system, the people getting their transfers at the street corners," said Manager Goodrich. "We have done this because the public seemed so dissatisfied with the present system. We have had many complaints of the working of the system, and, while I believe it is the very best system in existence for the use of the public, yet we are not going to insist upon it in the face of the opposition that has been aroused. The result of the whole matter is that we go back on the old system, beginning tomorrow morning."

Conversations with a number of street car conductors last night showed that they have been taken completely by surprise by the announcement of the change. Without an exception they testified that the new system had been working well and working better every day. They seemed to think that both the company and the public were being better served by the plan just abandoned. They said the number of people riding on transfers has been considerably less than it was previously. The difference is supposed to represent approximately the number of people who "played it" on the company in one way or another.

One great advantage on the side of the public which is lost is the privilege of changing cars at points other than the intersections and termini at Washington Avenue and 3rd Street. Another is the privilege of taking the first car that comes along and not waiting for a car on one particular line.

More transfer rule changes took effect in August 1891. No longer were return trips permitted on a parallel line. This change was meant to thwart passengers who lived between lines, or on lines that served the same street, avoiding paying a second fare for a return trip. For example, Lyndale-



Bryant passengers were no longer allowed free transfer to Hennepin, Nicollet, Hawthorne or Kenwood.

In St. Paul, transfers were still issued only for a single line. As they had in Minneapolis, passengers demanded to be able to transfer the first car out that was headed in their direction. The matter wound up in court, where TCRT lost.

March 2, 1892

The transfer slip question has again been decided by the St. Paul courts adversely to the street railway company. The transfers are not given in this city on the plan followed in Minneapolis. There a slip is given to any connecting line, while in St. Paul a passenger must specify the line to which he desires a transfer. In both cases that the courts have been called on to decide, the passenger boarded a car on a line other than the one designated, and was ejected. It is probable that the result of the suits will be the remodeling of the troublesome transfer slips, so they may be used on any connecting line instead of on only one specified line.

In December 1892 a Minneapolis ordinance was passed that eliminated free transfers to/from the Interurban line, provided that TCRT run local cars on the Interurban tracks as far as the city limits. Why the Council did this is unclear, because intercity rides on the Interurban already required two full

fares, and this added a third fare for transfer passengers. It appears that the City Council responded to the public backlash by approving the creation of additional transfer stations, including one at Oak and Washington, and maybe another at Seven Corners, where passengers could transfer free to the additional local cars, but not to the Interurban. Needless to say, this particular experiment ended within a short time.

Wherever streetcar lines met each other, new routings became available for passengers. Two examples occurred at Plymouth and Washington, and Broadway and Washington. Passengers staying in North Minneapolis could transfer, but had to pay an additional fare, or ride all the way downtown to receive a free transfer from a transfer agent, adding up to a half hour to the trip. In response to this situation, in 1893 transfer stations opened on Washington at Plymouth and Broadway.

The worst was yet to come. In April 1893, the Minneapolis city council passed an ordinance mandating a downtown transfer station at 1st Street and Hennepin Avenue. With it came the most cumbersome process yet employed, as described in the following article.

April 29, 1893 TO GET TRANSFERS THE NEW SYSTEM THAT WILL GO INTO EFFECT MAY 1

The citizens of Minneapolis on Monday next will be presented with a new transfer system. It is provided by the street railway company in connection with the new transfer ordinance recently passed by the city council. The street railway company has spent much time in preparing and perfecting the details under the new ordinance and has endeavored to make the new arrangements as simple and as convenient as possible to the traveling public. It ought not to take long for the citizens to learn the new system in all its details.

The ordinance provided for a transfer station to be built at Bridge Square, but

These three photos show the High Street end of the original Loop. Top: The streetcar is on High Street at Hennepin, next to the original Union Depot that was replaced in 1914 by the Great Northern Station across Hennepin. The bottom two photos are from the GN files at the Minnesota Historical Society. Middle: Looking south on Marquette with the tracks turning onto High Street in the foreground. Bottom: Looking west on High Street toward Hennepin. The Chicago Great Western freighthouse, originally built for the Wisconsin Central, is beyond the streetcar.

this clause was afterward knocked out on account of illegality. In lieu of the central transfer depot which was to have been built at this point the company has arranged to use the building located at 100 Hennepin Avenue. At this status the modus operandi will be as follows: The passenger upon alighting from the car will receive a ticket by an agent, who punches the exact time at

which the car arrives at this point. This ticket (see below), if presented immediately, will admit passengers to the depot. Upon leaving the depot the passenger will receive a ticket upon which is stamped the exact time at which it is given. This ticket will be accepted for fare only on the first car leaving this point on the line on which passenger wishes to travel after the time

indicated, and will not be accepted if presented at any other point on the line.

No change will be made in transfers now in the hands of conductors. Transfers will be issued by conductors at Plymouth and Washington, 20th Avenue (Broadway) and Washington, to and from the Emerson, Plymouth, Camden and 20th Avenue lines; at 4th and Central, and 2nd and Central, to and from the University, Central Avenue, 2nd Street NE and Monroe lines; at Washington and Cedar, and Cedar and Riverside, to and from the Minnehaha, Riverside, Cedar and Interurban local lines; at Oak Street to and from the Interurban and University lines.

The transfer station at the Nicollet House corner (Hennepin and Washington) will be removed. At Hennepin and Washington an agent will issue transfers from North Side cars as before. At 1st Avenue S. (Marquette) and Washington transfers will be issued to and from 1st Avenue, Bloomington, Minnehaha, Cedar Avenue and Interurban lines and those lines which do not pass the depot. This will enable a 1st Avenue passenger, for example, to transfer to the Minnehaha line without going around the loop.

No changes will be made in transfers or transfer points for those lines which do not pass the transfer depot, i.e. the transfers for the Plymouth and Emerson lines will be in the hands of an agent at Hennepin and Washington; those for the Washburn Park line will be given out by agents at First Avenue S. and Washington, and those for the St. Louis Park, Kenwood, Bryn Mawr and Lake Harriet lines will be given by the agents at Hennepin and 3rd Street. All transfers to and from the 4th Avenue line will also be issued at this point.

All transfers from the 8th (Chicago) Avenue, 6th Street and Central Avenue, University and Hawthorne, Western (Glenwood) Avenue and 2nd Street and Monroe and Lyndale lines will be made through the depot, except to those lines which do not pass through the depot; these will be made Hennepin and 3rd Street.

All agents will be supplied with a separate ticket for the Interurban local line, and passengers wishing transfers to this line will so state to the agent. No other ticket will be accepted by Interurban conductors.

Reporters watched the new system and filed these reports.

May 2, 1893 SCENES AT THE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED TRANSFER STATION

Thronging in the door labeled "In", and thronging out the door labeled "Out" yesterday, the crowd of people passed through the new transfer depot at 100 Hennepin avenue, somewhat bewildered at the innovation, but trying hard to master the details and succeeding admirably. True, it did seem like a great deal of red tape to get off a Bloomington car, for instance, with the intention of transferring to a Minnehaha, to find the Minnehaha waiting alongside and yet be obliged to get a time-punched ticket of admission to the transfer station, go in one door, get another ticket, and go out of the other door to take the Minnehaha car. Yet everybody good naturedly did all that was required of them, and seemed to conclude that it was not so bad after all. It takes a force of nine men to manage the depot, four transfer agents, two receivers, two stampers and a starter. The starter has a perch in the corner where he can see the cars coming from both ways, and he calls them out as they reach the depot. For instance, he calls "Hawthorne" or "University", depending upon which way the car is going.

All cars stop in front of the transfer depot a sufficiently long time to give everybody a chance to get from the building to the car. There is one transfer man on each side of the tracks, the other two transfer men relieving them after a certain length of time. The receivers take the time tickets as the traveler passes in and out of the depot, one receiver being stationed outside the "In" door and the other inside the "Out" door. These two functionaries had great trouble to keep people from going in and out at the wrong doors. Everybody was possessed with the idea that they ought to pass through the depot all right, but didn't see how it made any difference which door they went in and out of.

The two stampers inside stamp on the back of the tickets the car wanted and the time the passenger leaves the depot.

The depot is roomy inside and has central seats and seats around the wall, but

Twin City Rapid Transit Co. — Minneapolis Division															Series	
ADMIT BEARER TO DEPOT.															11 IN	
When properly punched and PRESENTED IMMEDIATELY upon alighting from car.																
This ticket will not be accepted for fare if presented on car.																
<i>Killard J. Hild</i> Gen'l Manager																
MINUTES	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55						
A.M.	6	7		9	10	11	12									
P.M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12				

Here are two artifacts from the arcane, short-lived system of issuing transfers at a central station. Above: The ticket to enter the station. Below: A transfer issued by a transfer agent.

Bryn Mawr	St. Louis Pk.	20th Av. N.	Cedar	Plymouth	Kenwood	Emerson	Minnehaha	Lake Harriet	West. Har. and 2d St. N.E.	Bloomington	Wash. Av. N. and Cam. P.	Gen. Av. East	Mon. & Lyn.	Univ. and Hawthorne	TO
129285															
ISSUED BY TRANSFER AGENT T															
1893. Jan. Feb. March. April. May. June. July. Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.															
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15															
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31															
HOURS	A.M.	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	P.M.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		

most of the people insist on crowding about the doors and gazing out of the windows for their cars. The traffic yesterday, the weather being disagreeable, was not heavy, so that it was handled with ease. It is difficult, however, to see, when the crowds are greatest, on a June Sunday afternoon, for instance, when immense crowds are going to Lake Harriet, how the people are all going to be accommodated without great inconvenience and many blunders.

At the central depot the change in the transfer system is of course most apparent. For the most part otherwise excepting some of the stations being done away with and others established, the new arrangement does not differ from the old.

May 9, 1893 TRANSFERS A TRIBUNE MAN TESTS THE NEW SYSTEM NOT SO BAD AS PAINTED

"Well of all the transfer systems I think this is the worst one yet. Why, it takes half an hour to get a transfer at that new depot, and you miss a car every time. And then you have to stay cooped up in that little place until your car comes, and when you finally get on, the chances are that the conductor won't take your transfer."

After hearing a large assortment of complaints like the above, a Tribune reporter concluded to do a little traveling and give the system a thorough test, to see if it actually was the intricate and inconvenient arrangement which many people seem to think it is.

And now, after trying the new transfer backwards and forwards, upside down and inside out, the writer is prepared to say that it is based on business principles, is sensible and is convenient. Indeed, when the traveling public becomes used to it, it will be found even an improvement upon the old.

The new system has all the privileges of the old and more, for there have been established transfer stations where there were none before. Transfers on the cars are issued now the same as before. No one is compelled to ride around the loop to get a transfer. The *modus operandi* of the transfer depot is not intricate, nor does it involve any loss of time. In short, the new system, as it has been arranged, is the

result of long experience in wrestling with the difficult problem of arranging a transfer system adequate to the growing needs of the city and the increasing demands made on the street railway company. Throughout the whole intricate street railway system of the city, wherever transfers would be an accommodation to the public, they are obtainable.

The reporter took an 8th (Chicago) Avenue and Central car to the transfer depot, with the intention of transferring to a 1st Avenue and Nicollet. Upon alighting from the car he was handed a ticket of admission to the depot. A receiver took his ticket as he went in. The transfer depot is large enough inside to accommodate ordinary traffic and there are plenty of seats. The reporter had scarcely time enough to take these details in, when the starter announced "1st Avenue and Nicollet".

"1st Avenue and Nicollet", said the investigator to the men behind the little railing and one of them handed him the desired transfer, with the time duly stamped upon the back of it, in the fashion of a clock dial, the hands pointing at the time at which the car he wished to take was scheduled to leave. The whole transaction occupied about a minute and a half.

It seemed to be much more convenient than the old way, where one took his transfer and then retired to a neighboring drug store or stood in the rain waiting for his car and straining his eyes as each successive car came along to see whether or not it was his.

The starter who calls off the cars in the transfer depot calls each one before it reaches the depot and there is ample time to secure the transfer and reach the car without haste.

It didn't take long for the public to rebel against the transfer station. In June 1893 the City Council discussed switching completely to on-board distribution of transfers by the conductor, as done in St. Paul. On July 15 the Council passed an ordinance to not require passengers to enter the transfer depot to pick up their transfer. The Minneapolis Tribune chronicled the complaints.

June 23, 1893 THAT TRANSFER STATION

Public spirited citizens have been sitting up nights to think of names for the much abused transfer station, and we hear it spoken of as "the black hole of Calcutta", the "cattle chute", "purgatory" and "pigpen"; it is called a badly kept, little, dark, dingy, filthy, dirty place, reeking with the aroma of a mixture of tobacco, garlic, stale beer and onions. It has been said that it is unfit for a lady to enter, and beneath the dignity of a gentleman to pass through.

July 19, 1893

Resolution of a North Side citizens meeting:

We denounce the present system of transfers at the transfer station as being unnecessary, obnoxious and causing useless delay.

Civil disobedience ensued.

July 25, 1893 TESTED THE TRANSFER

Last evening the citizens of the North Side were to make a test of the street railway transfer system requiring passengers to enter the depot to receive a transfer slip. According to a mutual understanding a delegation would meet at the central transfer on Hennepin Avenue at 6:15 o'clock and they would refuse to enter the building for transfer tickets. About the time named 10 men disembarked from a Bloomington car at the transfer, and, after receiving the red tickets entitling them to admission to the station, they refused to enter. When the Robbinsdale car came along they boarded it without having obtained the transfer tickets. The conductor on the car refused to take the tickets and the men were allowed to ride half of the way free.

Despite the "kicking", to use the slang of that era, months passed before a solution was mandated by the City Council. Referred to as the Harvey ordinance, it called for transfers to be given by conductors wherever lines intersected, instead of hauling passengers out of their way around the Loop. Meanwhile, more than 1600 passengers per hour were using the

transfer station at peak times, causing delays and street congestion. It cost TCRT \$19,000 per year to run all the stations.

By January 1894 the matter had ended up in court, where it was upheld. On May 1, 1894, all the transfer stations were abolished. Finally, all transfers were issued on the streetcars by the conductors, and all transfers now took place where the lines intersected. This basic system has remained in place every since.

All the transfer agents were eliminated. The Tribune reported on the change the next day.

May 2, 1894 EXPERIENCE YESTERDAY WITH THE NEW TRANSFER SYSTEM.

Downtown streets and corners where transfer stations had been stationed for years had a strange and unfamiliar look yesterday. The transfer agents were not there, and in some cases the transfer houses had been moved, and what was most noticeable of all was the absence of the crowd of people usually to be seen at all hours of the day, waiting for their cars. All this change was due to the introduction of a new system of transfers, whereby the little slips were issued on the cars and by the conductors at points of intersection instead of at the stations by the agents.

The new system was very successfully inaugurated. In some cases there was a little trouble and confusion, but altogether things worked smoother than could be expected. The directions printed on the transfer slips proved of great assistance to passengers, and the great majority of them were handled without trouble by the conductors.

Downtown, where the old transfer stations were, there were always stores nearby, but as many of the points at which transfer slips are now issued are out in the residential portion of the city, no protection from storm or heat is offered.

The new system is hard on the conductors, and many of the complaints came from them. It isn't as easy as it looks to go through a car, collect all the fares and attend to the running of the car beside, and most of the time of the conductors is very



Finally, in 1894, TCRT adopted the basic transfer system that continued well into the bus era—transfers handed out by conductors (and later motormen and bus drivers) and honored at any transfer point. Both Minnesota Historical Society collection.

fully taken up with these duties. The additional labor of seeing that transfers are issued at all points of intersection, therefore, falls heavily on them, and with 50 or 60 passengers on board, their lot is not as pleasant as might be imagined. Extra trip have to be made to see that all the transfers wanted are given out and this, in a crowded car, requires considerable time. Conductors issuing transfers yesterday who waited until they reached the point of intersection before giving them out found them selves in trouble, as they lost time in punching the slips for the necessary number of passengers. The delay for each was small, but it mounted up when 10 or 12 got off at the same place.

The High Street loop was abandoned in 1931.

The transfer itself

Soon after transfers first appeared, streetcar passengers learned to game the system to avoid paying fares. Seeing this, streetcar companies went to great lengths to prevent revenue loss. Transfers were only issued upon boarding. They could only be redeemed at designated transfer points, although TCRT created large Transfer Zones within the two downtowns where transfers could be redeemed at any car stop. To control their distribution, serial numbers were printed on each transfer, and the transfers were consecutively numbered in pads. Transfer agents, and later conductors, were required to record the serial numbers, account for all transfers issued at the end of the shift and hand in any not issued. Transfers were custom printed for each line and, in the early years, even each conductor, with the conductor's number printed on the face. To make it easier to spot and challenge a bad transfer, each line's tickets were printed in a different color. Different colors and date codes prevented passengers from using a transfer from a previous day.

MSM is fortunate to have the transfer collection of the late Joseph Zalusky, who was very active in the Hennepin County Historical Society.

He acquired some very rare items, including complete sets of every transfer issued beginning in 1892, plus a few that are older.

He wrote an article on fares and transfers that appeared in the Winter 1961 issue of Hennepin County History. Here's an excerpt.

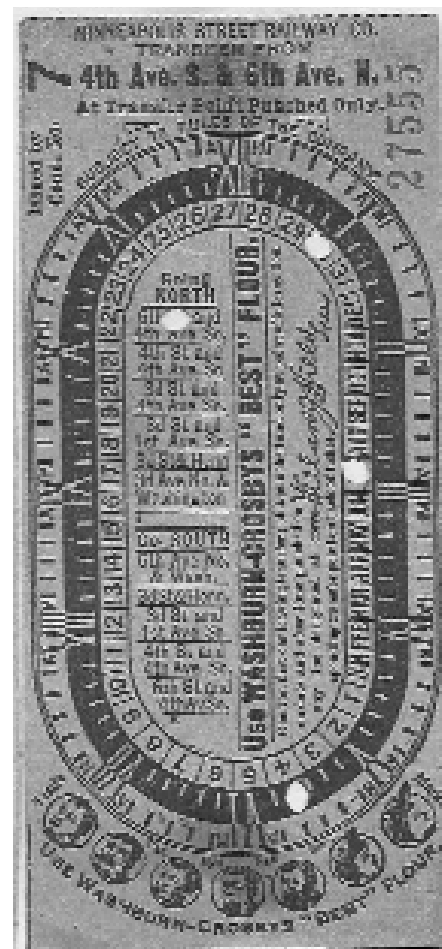
Probably the first transfer was issued in 1890. At a transfer point where nearly all streetcars met (Washington and Hennepin Avenues) riders would be given transfers. The unused ones were either thrown away or given to alert kids who in turn would sell them for 2 cents apiece to those that didn't care to pay a nickel for a ride home or to work. Many people displayed a strong impulse to try to use transfers for stop-over purposes. A woman would ride downtown, get off the car, get a transfer, do her errands, and use the transfer to go elsewhere.

In order to stop the trolley riders from passing transfers at the end of the trip to other persons waiting to board cars, the company (in 1894) put into use a new type of transfer. At one end were printed 7 faces, 5 were masculine decorated according to the tonsorial fashion of the day. There were full bloom beards, a chin whisker type, the heavy handle barred mustache, a sideburn look and a smooth shaven gent. Two types of women were represented. When you requested a transfer at a transfer point, it became the job of the transfer agent to give you the once over and punch the face on the ticket that most nearly resembled yours. Apparently this went too far. Many people became peeved at the puncher's estimate and protested to the company. In a few months the faces were eliminated from the transfer.

Walking the fine line between passenger convenience and minimizing revenue loss resulted in incredibly complex transfer rules. In 1923 TCRT issued separate pocket sized transfer rulebooks for each city, 165 pages for Minneapolis and 120 pages for St. Paul. In addition to general rules, each book had chapters describing the peculiarities of each line. Much as I enjoy the minutia of streetcar and transit operations, trying

to read it made my eyes glaze over and I wonder how motormen and conductors kept it all straight.

Transfers had a limited life. The conductor was instructed to ask the person where he or she wanted to transfer, then to punch the first 15-minute increment past the car's scheduled arrival at that transfer point. On our sample Lake Nokomis-Camden transfer on the next page, that was the purpose of the boxes marked "42nd Ave. No.", "Cedar Ave.", "W. Broadway", "Franklin Ave" and "Lake St". Otherwise transfers were punched for the downtown time.



The short-lived 1894 "face" transfer.

The transfer was only good on the first connecting car after the punched time. At least that was the theory.

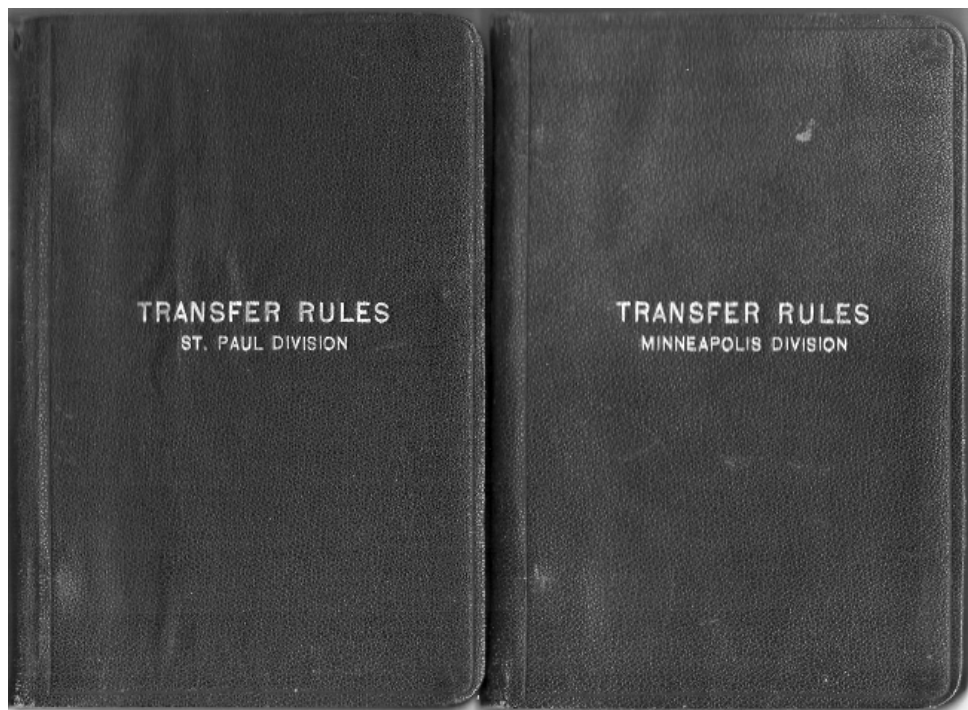
The transfer had a couple of other features. Passengers riding a pullin car to the carbarn could request a "Station" transfer to permit them to ride farther down the line on a regular car. In the case of Lake Nokomis-Camden, this would be a transfer from a pullin to North Side Station (24th and Washington Ave. N.) to a regular Camden car. The "Continuation" box worked the same way. It allowed a passenger to transfer from a short line car to a long line car to complete a trip.

Punching the "Emergency" box gave the conductor a way to suspend the rules and keep his passengers moving in the event of a breakdown, accident or other unforeseen problem.

Some trips required three streetcars to complete. This is where the rules got really complicated. I've read the line-specific rules for when to issue or deny a "re-transfer" and have trouble understanding what they were trying to do. It appears that one of two things happened—either the transfer was punched and handed back to the passenger to use again on a third streetcar, or the transfer was collected and a new transfer issued. For any given line, TCRT figured out when re-transfers could be permitted without creating the opportunity for a free round trip. Here's a typical, hard to understand example: Transfers from lines crossing Snelling Avenue, punched in blank space directly following the words 'Snelling Avenue', shall be accepted only on south or east-bound cars of lines intersecting Snelling Avenue. Additional transfer for connecting lines shall not be issued thereon.

It was immediately followed by this: Transfers from lines crossing Snelling Avenue, punched in blank space directly following the words 'Snelling Avenue', shall be accepted in either direction on lines not intersecting Snelling Avenue. Additional transfer for connecting lines shall not be issued thereon. Oy.

Some retransfer rules involved punching the "Suburban" box,



The 1923 version of the transfer, and the 1923 rulebooks governing its use.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	Station	Suburban	N			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		15	16	EMERGENCY
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		31	CONTINUATION	
It is Unlawful to sell, dispose of, or give this Transfer to any person except the Conductor. TWIN CITY LINES The Giver and Receiver are equally guilty under the law. See other side.												Lake Nokomis - Camden				42nd Ave. No.	A.M.
												Cedar Ave.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	69 015125				P.M.	
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	W. Broadway					
30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	Franklin Ave					
45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	Lake St				S	
												Crossing		Lines Not			

although that appears to have applied only to the Mahtomedi and Robbinsdale lines, not the equally suburban Lake Minnetonka, Columbia Heights and South St. Paul lines. Go figure. As an interesting aside, TCRT honored transfers issued by the independent Minneapolis, Anoka & Cuyuna Range, but apparently not

those from the St. Paul Southern.

Despite all these precautions, round tripping still happened. All that was needed was a different return route to the rider's starting point. Usually the return trip required two streetcars to complete, but you could do it on a single fare. For example, if a trip from Lake and Chicago to downtown was

on the Chicago Avenue line, a return trip via Nicollet Avenue with a transfer to the Lake Street line could be made. It took more time, and it only worked legitimately if the downtown stopover was brief. However, if the conductor didn't bother to look at the transfer's expiration time, or the date, you could get away with it. Reading all the information on a transfer took time. When loading a crowd at a big downtown stop, it wasn't that hard to slip by with a bad transfer.

In 1950 TCRT finally addressed the issue of retransferring. This from a newspaper story:

Under the present system, a rider can ask for a transfer when the fare is paid and merely "flash" it to the operator or conductor when boarding the next bus or streetcar.

The trouble has been, Superintendent Barnes said, that some riders keep flashing the same transfer all day long. Part of the blame, said Barnes, lies with the operators and conductors who haven't been diligent enough to inspect transfers for the time and route punched.

(With the new multicolored transfers) all the operators and conductors have to do in the future is memorize the system's color scheme and then take up transfers taken as fare, to check time and direction.

If the rider needs a second transfer, the operator or conductor will issue one freshly punched with time and direction. There will be space on the edge for an additional punch to show that the rider has been issued one, two or three transfers—with three the limit of the number to be issued. Barnes said it is possible to get anywhere in either of the Twin Cities on three transfers.

Somehow that still sounds extremely complicated. This same transfer format remained in use after the conversion to bus and well into the era of public ownership.

Gradually, however, the restrictions were relaxed, because the goal of publically-owned Metro Transit was to increase ridership, not maximize revenue. The life of transfers was extended to 2.5 hours, so that a trip from one end of the system to the other could be accommodated. Then came "Stop and Shop", permitting a stopover and continuation on the same route.

Finally, with the implementation of smart fareboxes, came the "time-only" transfer. A transfer was now good for 2.5 hours, with no limit on the number of buses or the direction of travel. It was (and still is) essentially a 2.5-hour pass. It eliminated the thicket of arcane rules that often confused passengers and created a cat-and-mouse game, with passengers trying to creatively beat the system and drivers trying to catch them.

Best of all, the fareboxes were now programmed to reject expired transfers. Before, when drivers rejected transfers, it sometimes led to disputes with passengers and some of those ended with the driver being assaulted. However, it is much harder to argue with a machine, especially when the farebox's distinctive rejection beep is heard and understood by the entire bus. The savings in driver injuries alone probably paid for the loss of fare revenue due to fewer restrictions.



Here's a really rare one. From 1887 until 1893, St. Paul's Maria line was isolated. To reach downtown, passengers had to transfer at 7th and Maria to the East 7th Street cable line, so the company waived the usual extra nickel and permitted a free transfer.

A GALLERY OF TRANSFER ADVERTISING

For those who think that advertising everywhere is a modern thing, think again. Beginning in the 1890s, TCRT partially offset the considerable cost of printing millions of transfers by selling advertising, first on the front and later on the back. Here are some examples.

Are You a

Goodfellow's?

They are the largest exclusive

Dry Goods and Cloak

Housed in the city, and always sell their goods at lower prices than any other store. It will pay you to try them.

They are agents for

- Standard Patterns,
- Standard Magazine,
- Standard Delicatessen.

All Cars pass within a block of their store.

247 to 251 OLLET AVE.

THIS TRANSFER IS ISSUED SUBJECT TO FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: GOOD ONLY ON DATE PRINTED. FOR PASSENGERS TO WHOM TRANSFER IS ISSUED, THE FIRST CAR WHICH PASSENGER CAN TAKE BY GOING DIRECTLY TO THE TRANSFER POINT. TRANSFERS ARE ISSUED ONLY UPON REQUEST OF PASSENGERS AT THE TIME THE FARE IS PAID. EXCEPT CONTINUATION TRANSFERS WHICH ARE ISSUED ONLY AT THE TRANSFER POINT. IN CASE OF CONTROVERSY REGARDING A TRANSFER, PASSENGER IS REQUESTED TO PAY REGULAR FARE AND REPORT FACTS FOR PROMPT ADJUSTMENT TO: GENERAL PASSENGER AGENT MINNEAPOLIS MAIN 1214 ST. PAUL CEDAR 7381

Seven wealthy towns contend for Homer dead
Through which the living Homer begged his bread.

—Anonymous

A SELF-RELIANT ASSOCIATION OF SELF-RELIANT PEOPLE

A GOOD TREE TO COME TO FOR SHELTER

THE MINNEAPOLIS SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION

SAVINGS AND LOAN BLDG. JOHN W. HELM, President ST. PAUL OFFICE
2nd AVENUE S. at 7th ST. FRED L. ENDISLEY, Exec. Sec'y-Treas. 12 EAST 4th ST.

MINNEAPOLIS 4
ST. PAUL 4
TRANSFER POINT
WESTERN AVE. & 2nd ST. N.E.
AT 7th Street Public Banded Only

Gold Medal Flour

EVENTUALLY — WHY NOT NOW?

USE THIS TRANSFER AND COME TO

All Interurban Cars Bring You to Our Door

SILKS
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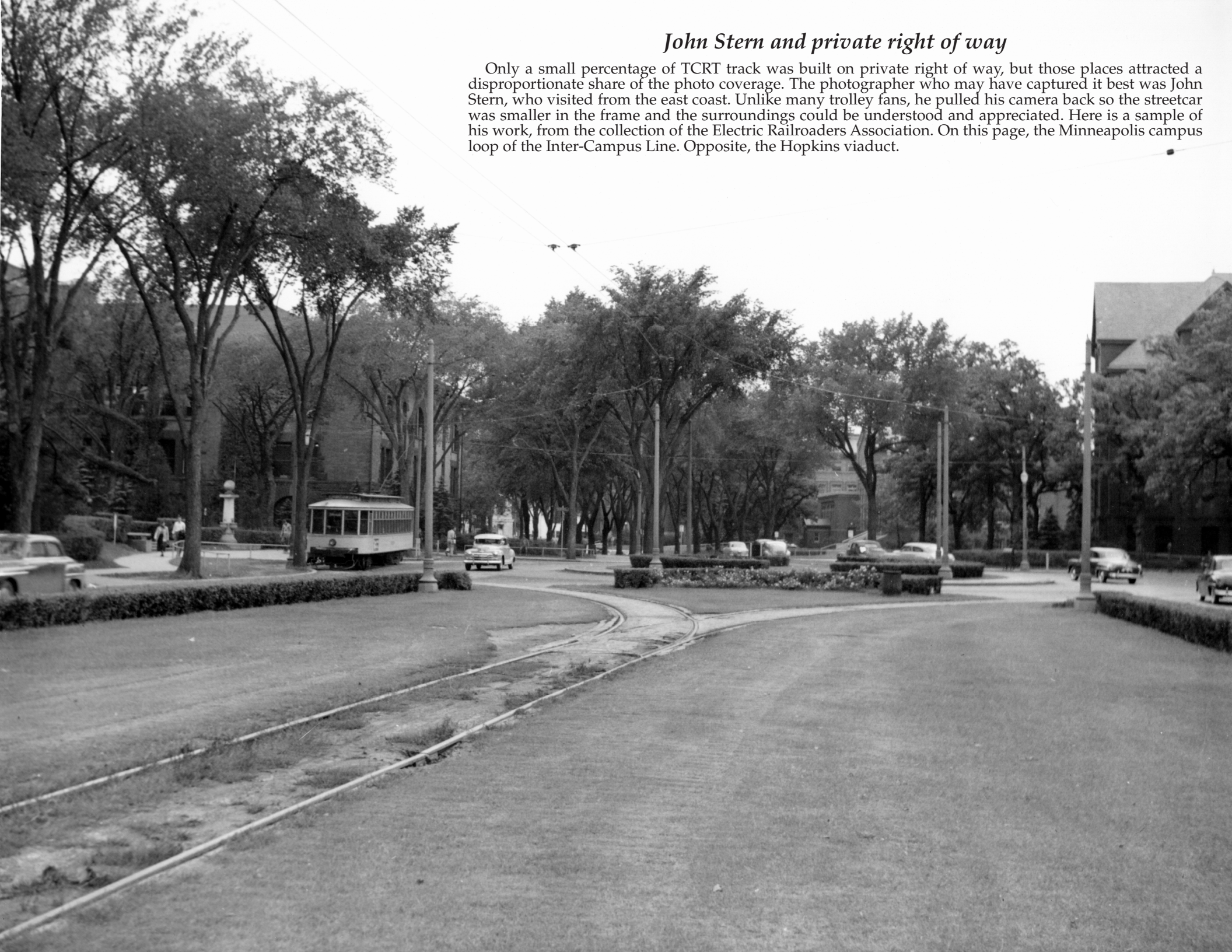
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John Stern and private right of way

Only a small percentage of TCRT track was built on private right of way, but those places attracted a disproportionate share of the photo coverage. The photographer who may have captured it best was John Stern, who visited from the east coast. Unlike many trolley fans, he pulled his camera back so the streetcar was smaller in the frame and the surroundings could be understood and appreciated. Here is a sample of his work, from the collection of the Electric Railroaders Association. On this page, the Minneapolis campus loop of the Inter-Campus Line. Opposite, the Hopkins viaduct.





Como Park, approaching
Lexington Avenue





Ft. Snelling shuttle, near the Mendota Bridge

The Mahtomedi Line on Charles
Street in North St. Paul,
at the Soo Line crossing.
Note the full-time TCRT
crossing guard.





MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

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Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509
www.TrolleyRide.org

August 2021

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